

PERSONALITY TYPE AND THE EFFECTS OF VERBAL  
REPORTS OF VIOLENCE ON AGGRESSION

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REPORTS OF VIOLENCE ON AGGRESSION

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## PREFACE

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain whether different types of individuals react differently to exposures of verbal reports of violence. It was felt that individuals with a repertoire of aggressive behaviors would tend to respond differently to either exposure to violence alone or to exposure to violence preceded by anger-arousal (insult) than would individuals with a more limited pattern of aggressive responses.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. LITERATURE REVIEW . . . . .	3
Hostility Catharsis versus Contagion Explanation . . . . .	3
Variables Involved in the Effects of Media Violence . . . . .	8
Scale 4 of the MMPI . . . . .	11
III. PROBLEM . . . . .	15
IV. METHOD . . . . .	16
Subjects . . . . .	16
Apparatus . . . . .	16
Procedure . . . . .	17
V. DESIGN . . . . .	22
VI. RESULTS . . . . .	23
VII. DISCUSSION . . . . .	27
VIII. SUMMARY . . . . .	30
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	31
APPENDIX A . . . . .	35
APPENDIX B . . . . .	36
APPENDIX C . . . . .	41
APPENDIX D . . . . .	43
APPENDIX E . . . . .	44
APPENDIX F . . . . .	45
APPENDIX G . . . . .	46
APPENDIX H . . . . .	48
APPENDIX I . . . . .	49
APPENDIX J . . . . .	50
APPENDIX K . . . . .	51
APPENDIX L . . . . .	52

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Summary Table for Analysis of Covariance . . . . .	24

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Adjusted Mean Shock for High $\lambda$ 's in Three Conditions . . .	25
2. Adjusted Mean Shock for Low $\lambda$ 's in Three Conditions . . . .	26

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In our society, violence indeed appears to be a prevalent theme. Radio, television, newspapers, comic books, magazines, and novels all bring numerous, vivid accounts of both real and fantasy violence.

Schramm (1961) in an investigation of the extent of violence depicted on television conducted a survey of program content for a 100 hour period. His findings indicated that over half of the 100 hour period was devoted to programs evolving around themes of violence.

Even the news media manages to convey to the individual extensive details of crime and brutality. Exposure to violent accounts of murders, wars, riots, and destruction through the news are part of almost everyone's daily experiences.

Presently, an increasing amount of concern is developing regarding the possible effect this continuous bombardment with violence via the media may be having on our society. While some authorities feel that there is little call for alarm (Klapper, 1960) others have expressed extreme concern. Wertham (1968), for example, contends that the continuous, unending exposure of children to hostile material is having a much more extensive effect than is generally recognized, and has gone so far as to declare that television is a school for violence.

The purpose of this investigation was to probe further into the question of what effects the violence theme may be having on the indi-

vidual within our society. More specifically, this investigation dealt with the effects of hearing a radio news broadcast which contained a heavy loading of violent content on subsequent tendencies to aggress, and explored the question of whether aggression-arousal effects are equivalent for different personality types.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Hostility Catharsis versus Contagion Explanation

At present there are two major opposing views regarding the effects of exposure to hostile material on behavior. One side contends that exposure to violence will tend to decrease subsequent tendencies to aggress. Thus, the presentation of violence is construed as having a beneficial social effect. This orientation, which has been extended from the psychoanalytic concept of catharsis, maintains that the expression of aggression will reduce subsequent tendencies to aggress. Extended to the media, it proposes that simply viewing violence will allow a reduction in aggressive tendencies through permitting the individual to expel his hostile inclinations in a vicarious symbolic manner. Generally, this explanation has been referred to as the "hostility catharsis hypothesis" or the "release theory."

Feshbach (1955) has been the foremost proponent of this view. In his well-known study, he found that writing aggressive TAT stories following the arousal of aggression led to a reduction in the amount of subsequent aggressive behaviors manifest. In an attempt to provide further support for a cathartic effect, Feshbach (1961) exposed college students to either a ten minute fight scene or a film about how rumors spread in a factory. Half of the students in each condition were insulted prior to the exposure, while the other half were not. The num-

ber of aggressive responses to a word association test was utilized as a measure of aggression. Feshbach's findings indicated that witnessing an aggressive fight film under conditions of anger-arousal resulted in a cathartic effect (i.e. a decrease in aggression level). On the basis of this investigation, he concluded that the drive reducing effect of a vicarious aggressive act was extremely dependent upon the aggressive state of the individual at the time. Only if the individual were aroused would a cathartic effect result.

Siegel (1956) attempted to subject the "release theory" to experimental test. Children between the ages of three and five were shown either a non-aggressive or an aggressive film. After the film, two children (one from each group) were left in a playroom for approximately 14 minutes, and ratings were made of the amount of aggressive behaviors exhibited. Each child served as his own control returning one week later to view whichever film he had not been exposed to initially. Siegel's findings, although not significant, were in an opposite direction than that which would be predicted by a cathartic effect. There appeared to be a trend toward increased aggression after exposure to an aggressive cartoon rather than a reduction.

In another attempt to investigate the catharsis hypothesis, Mallick and McCandless (1966) used third grade pupils. One group was subjected to a frustrating situation while another group was not frustrated. Both were then allowed to shoot guns at targets. Afterwards, the children were given an opportunity to "get even" with their frustrator. Neither the frustration group nor the non-frustration group showed a significant reduction in their tendencies to aggress as a result of the opportunity to engage in aggressive play. However, when

they were given a reasonable positive interpretation for the frustrater's action a reduction effect was found. Expression of aggression in itself was not sufficient to result in a reduction of the amount of hostility manifested.

Still other attempts to replicate and extend Feshbach's work have met with little success, and experimental support for a cathartic effect seems to be quite limited. Berkowitz (1962), in a review of the experimental findings on the effects of violence via the mass media, states that "there is no need for theoretical twisting and turning on this point; there simply is no adequate evidence that hostility catharsis occurs through vicarious aggression (p. 240);" and offers a second explanation for the effects of exposure to violence. He proposes that instead of decreasing the tendency to aggress, exposure to violence will generally result in a weakening of inhibitions against aggression; and, thus, an increment in tendencies to engage in aggressive behaviors. This viewpoint regards violence as possessing potentially detrimental effects for society, rather than beneficial ones as proponents of the catharsis hypothesis maintain.

Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1963) have found support for this second explanation in their study involving nursery school children. Children were shown either (1) a real-life model engaged in aggressive actions toward a Bobo doll; (2) the same model engaged in aggression toward the doll on film; or (3) an aggressive cartoon involving a doll. Later each child was frustrated and left in a playroom with a number of toys including a Bobo doll. All three conditions were found to result in an increase in the amount of aggressive behaviors the children subsequently exhibited toward the doll.

Lovaas (1961) in a similar study showed cartoons to groups of nursery school children. One group viewed an animated cartoon depicting a great deal of aggression, while another group saw a cartoon of a relatively non-violent nature. Later the children were allowed to play with toys which were activated by pressing a bar. Activation of one toy caused a doll to strike another doll, while the other toy was rather neutral in its actions. Lovaas found that children who had been shown an aggressive cartoon would show a greater interest in the "aggressive" toy, and would activate it to a significantly greater extent than would children who had been exposed to a more neutral cartoon.

In still another investigation by Mussen and Rutherford (1961) findings again indicated that children exposed to aggression will show significant increases in tendencies to aggress. Mussen and Rutherford assigned first grade children to one of six groups. Three groups were asked to copy numbers, and while doing so were constantly criticized by their teacher. Immediately afterwards, one group viewed an aggressive cartoon, another saw a non-aggressive cartoon, and a third group was not exposed to either cartoon. The remaining three groups were assigned to each of the same conditions, but were not subjected to the frustration situation. The measure of aggression level consisted of the child's verbal expression of his desire to destroy a balloon. Children who had been exposed to the aggressive cartoon were found to express a greater desire to "pop" the balloon than did children who saw either a non-aggressive cartoon or no cartoon. Frustrated and non-frustrated groups were not found to differ significantly.

The three studies just discussed have one basic feature in common.

They all utilized young children as subjects. However, this affect does not appear to be solely limited to children. Walter, Thomas, and Ackers (1962) found that male adults who had been shown a filmed knife-fight scene would administer more severe electric shock to another individual than would those who saw a movie with a non-violent theme. Wheeler and Caggiula (1966) conducted a study employing enlisted Navy men as subjects and obtained similar findings. Thus, these findings tend to refute some early attempts to partially explain reactions to violence with tendencies toward increased aggression as a function of the inability of children to make clear distinctions between fantasy and reality.

Neither does the result of exposure to violence appear to be limited solely to viewing filmed hostile material. Scharff (1971) found that listening to a radio news broadcast which was heavily laden with violent content would also result in increased tendencies to aggress; and Goldstein and Arms (1971) demonstrated that the viewing of an aggressive, competitive sport such as football would produce heightened feelings of hostility.

In summary, this second explanation regarding the effects of violence, termed by Wheeler and Caggiula (1966) as the "contagion explanation," tends to reign in terms of experimental support. The catharsis hypothesis does not appear to be extendable to the effects of exposure to hostile material as has been maintained by Klapper (1960), and others.

Variables Involved in the Effects of  
Media Violence

Witnessed violence undoubtedly seems capable of reducing inhibitions against aggression in most cases. But under what conditions are these changes most apparent? One factor which has been shown to have a regulative effect on the resultant degree of aggressive behaviors is the attitude of the observer as has been demonstrated by Berkowitz, Corwin, and Hieronimus (1963). In their investigation male college students were shown either a prize fight scene or a film clip about canal boats. Half of the students were insulted prior to viewing the film, while the remainder were treated in a neutral fashion. Before actually beginning the film fight, part of the Ss were given an outline of the story which provided a justified explanation for the aggression depicted while the others received a non-justified explanation. Findings indicated that if fantasy aggression is socially justified, a weakening of restraints against hostility in insulted observers may occur, and tendencies to aggress will resultantly increase.

In a similar study by Berkowitz and Rawlings (1962) it was also demonstrated that justified aggression is much more likely to strengthen the audience's own hostile tendencies as compared to non-justified violence. Berkowitz (1970) contends that this increase may be explained in terms of a reduction of inhibitions by showing that aggression pays or making it a legitimate action. As it has been so aptly expressed by Berkowitz, Corwin, and Hieronimus (1963), viewing violence which has been socially sanctioned seems to make the viewer believe that it is permissible to attack the "villians" or frustrators in his own life.

In addition to the attitude of the observer, the level of emotional arousal has been shown to be another factor which may affect the strength of aggressive tendencies. Generally it is maintained that under conditions of anger-arousal a greater increase in tendencies to aggress will occur. Geen and Berkowitz (1967) found that subjects who had been insulted would administer stronger shocks than individuals who had experienced frustration but had not been insulted. In an investigation by Scharff (1971) findings indicated that angered college students tended to show significant increases in aggression level after exposure to a tape of a violent news broadcast, while neither insult alone nor exposure to violence alone resulted in a significant increment. In addition, Wheeler and Caggiula in their 1966 investigation found that the instigation to aggression combined with the observation of an aggressive model would produce a greater frequency of aggression by the viewers than a simple additive model of the two would suggest.

Still a third factor which may also be taken into consideration in determining the possible effects of violence on the tendency to aggress is the stimulus properties of the potential target. Geen and Berkowitz (1967) experimentally demonstrated that insulted male college students would administer stronger shocks to a frustrator whose name had been associated with the name of the victim in a previously viewed film of a fight scene than to an insulter whose name differed from that of the victim. Thus, the degree to which the real-life situation and the depicted fantasy situation have similar stimulus value may affect the extent to which the individual will show increased aggressive behaviors. It appears that the more generalization there is from the depicted situation to the audience's own situation, the greater

the tendency of the viewer to imitate the aggressive behaviors displayed.

One additional variable which may also be involved in predicting the extent to which exposure to violence will yield increments in aggression level is the individual's repertoire of aggressive habits. Many authorities have maintained that the effects of violence are not equivalent for all audience members, and that extreme changes in aggression level are confined to only a small minority of the viewers (Schramm et al., 1961; Berkowitz, 1962). Berkowitz (1962) proposed that the extent to which an individual has a repertoire of aggressive habits may affect the degree to which he will react with increased overt hostility to violence exposures. Kniveton and Stephenson (1970) have recognized the importance that personal susceptibility may have, and have strongly suggested that further research should center around personality variables and tendencies to react to violence.

In an experimental investigation conducted by Eron (1963) it was found that persons who have a history of aggressive behaviors seem to be more inclined to seek out violent scenes. In an attempt to relate television viewing habits to aggressive behavior, Eron found a strong positive relationship between the amount of violent material in the favorite programs of third grade boys and the amount of aggressive behavior displayed in the classroom. Although this implies that some relationships may exist between aggression and viewing violence, it is hard to ascertain whether the boys preferred violence as a result of their own aggressive inclinations, whether aggressive tendencies were partially a result of such exposure, or if the resulting relationship was some combination of the two. The possibility exists that it may

take a certain type of person to react with increased aggression to exposures to violence, and this same type person may tend to seek out violent material.

In an attempt to provide some possible clues regarding the relationship between personality type and effects of viewing violence, this study proposed that the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory's Scale 4 (Psychopathic Deviate Scale) be employed as an indicator of already existing tendencies toward aggression. It was felt that the individual who possesses some tendencies toward aggression may react differently to exposures of violence than an individual who is more restrained and conforming, and who appears to possess more inhibitions against aggressive behaviors. Scale 4 is purportedly capable of detecting both of these personality types.

#### Scale 4 of the MMPI

Scale 4 of the MMPI was originally designed to measure the personality characteristics of the amoral and asocial subgroup of persons who have been diagnostically labeled as psychopathic personality (McKinley and Hathaway, 1944). The criterion group originally employed in the development of the scale consisted of a rather young age group, 17 to 22 years, all of whom had long histories of delinquency, and had received a diagnosis of psychopathic personality disorder. College controls were utilized for comparison purposes. The results of McKinley and Hathaway's findings suggested that Scale 4 was capable of discriminating between normal and psychopathic groups; and thus, possessed some value as a diagnostic instrument. Test-retest correlation was established at 0.71 with a normal sample of 47 cases. The

time period ranged from a few days to more than a year.

The final version of the Pd Scale consisted of 50 items to which subjects are to respond by answering "true," "false," or "cannot say." Content ranges widely with some of the general areas touched upon involving the degree of alienation of the individual from his family, difficulties associated with school and authority, frank admission of personal limitations and sexual difficulties, and denial of social shyness as well as assertion of self-confidence (Dahlstrom and Welsh, 1960). Generally a T-score of 70 or above (two standard deviations above the mean) is considered to be somewhat elevated.

High scores on Scale 4 alone have often been associated with an aggressive, impulsive immature type personality (Gilberstadt and Duker, 1965); while low scores on Scale 4 are generally considered to characterize a relatively restrained, conventional, conforming type individual who has a narrow range of interests (Dahlstrom and Welsh, 1960). Studies by the Institute for Personality Assessment and Research (IPAR) staff have provided a somewhat more extensive characterization of the High 4 type and Low 4 type. The High 4, according to IPAR, is frequently characterized by the following descriptive adjectives: hostile, aggressive, sarcastic, cynical, ostentatious, exhibitionistic, aggressive in interpersonal relationships, immature, irritable, leisurely, unemotional, tense, moody, nervous, and resentful (1952). On the other hand, the Low 4 is depicted as submissive, compliant, overly accepting of authority, conforming, cheerful, good-tempered, persistent, pleasant, shy, sincere, trusting, conservative, dependable, enthusiastic, gentle, idealistic, inventive, meek, reasonable, and unassuming.

In a comparison of the high and low scorers on Scale 4 by Dahlstrom and Welsh (1960), it was maintained that the most marked differences between the two were in terms of drive level, energy, and spontaneity. The High 4's energy level is such that he is much more apt to become involved in activities which will result in social disapproval, while the Low 4 type is more conventional and restrained. In fact, Hathaway and Meehl (1952) have felt that the Low 4 type is characterized by only two descriptive adjectives one of which is conventional, while the other is having narrow interests.

In a study of MMPI profiles and personality characteristics by Hovey (1953), behavioral ratings of student nurses were compared with their scores on the MMPI. MMPI scores were computed using K, and the distribution of subjects in terms of scores were divided dichotomously at the 75th percentile. Low scores were determined by using the 25th percentile as a dividing point. A comparison was then made for high and low scorers on all eight of the clinical scales. Their findings indicated that student nurses who possess high scores on Scale 4 tend to be aggressive, possess initiative, and tend to participate actively in group discussions at staffings. On the other hand, student nurses who had low scores on Scale 4 were more frequently described as accepting suggestions willingly, and possessing perseverance.

In another investigation of MMPI profile types, Drake (1954) attempted to ascertain if certain types of profiles were associated with male counselees who were difficult to work with. Drake used male college students who had applied to a university counseling service as his subjects. T-scores above 54 were coded as high, while T-scores of 45 or less were coded as low. Drake's findings suggested that

counseling cases who had high scores on Scales 4 and 9 tended to be aggressive and opinionated. Drake concluded that counseling cases who were found to be difficult to deal with because they were either aggressive and/or opinionated could be detected by elevations on Scales 4 and 9 with lower scores on Scale 5.

Elevations on Scale 4 in combination with elevations on Scale 3 have also been frequently associated with a hostile-aggressive acting out pattern. Davis and Sines (1971) and Persons and Marks (1971) both found that the 4-3 MMPI code type was associated with violent behavior. In addition, Butcher (1965) found that aggressive adolescents tended to differ from low aggressive adolescents in that they have higher elevations on Scales 4 and 3.

In consideration of the fore mentioned findings, it seems relatively safe to conclude that the MMPI does provide some clues as to the extensiveness of the aggressive habits of a given individual when high scores on Scale 4 are present. Thus, it seems reasonable to employ this scale as a subject selection device to investigate the relationship between personality type and the effects of exposure to violent material.

## CHAPTER III

### PROBLEM

Previous research has pointed toward the possibility that different personality types may respond differently to exposures of violence. In fact, a recent report to the Surgeon General (1972) on the effects of exposure to violence has stressed the importance of further investigations being conducted in this area. The purpose of this study was to ascertain if different types of persons react differently to exposure to violent material. More specifically, this investigation dealt with the effects of exposure to verbal reports of violence on individuals with high scores on Scale 4 of the MMPI (T-score greater than 70), and those with low scores on Scale 4 (T-score less than 50). It was felt that Ss with high scores, who are purportedly more prone to aggressive behaviors, would react differently when exposed to either violence preceded by insult or violence alone than would low scorers, who are reported to possess a more limited repertoire of aggressive responses.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHOD

#### Subjects

Sixty male college students enrolled in introductory psychology courses at Oklahoma State University served as the Ss. Each was selected on the basis of his score on Scale 4 on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) with K correction added. Thirty Ss were chosen on the basis of a T-score of 50 or below (Low 4 Type) while the remaining 30 Ss were selected on the basis of a T-score of 70 or above (High 4 Type). The mean score for the Low 4 Types was 47, while the mean score for High 4's was 76. The T-scores for lows ranged from 33 to 50, while for highs the range extended from 70 to 95.

#### Apparatus

A shock apparatus similar in design to Buss' aggression machine was utilized (Buss, 1961). The apparatus consisted of a box-shaped structure, black in color, dimensions 11.5" x 22.5" x 11.5". The front panel consisted of a series of ten levers. Each lever was numbered in order from one to ten with the word "mild" placed near lever number one, and the word "strong" placed near the tenth lever. In addition, another lever was located in the middle of the panel below the ten levers, and designated as "ready." Wires extended from the box to an adjoining room where they were connected to a small panel

(14" x 6") with a series of lights (numbered one to ten) corresponding to the levers, and an "alert" light located at the extreme right which corresponded to the "ready" lever (see Appendix A).

#### Procedure

The methodology for this investigation was similar to that employed by Scharff (1971) in his investigation of the effects of hearing a radio news broadcast with heavy loadings of violence on subsequent tendencies to aggress. The most major modification consisted of utilizing the MMPI Scale 4 (with K correction) as a S selection device.

Scale 4 and Scale K of the MMPI were administered to approximately 400 male students enrolled in introductory psychology courses (see Appendix B). The 30 Ss were selected on the basis of a T-score of 70 or above, and 30 Ss were selected on the basis of the T-score of 50 or below. In order to avoid the possibility of Ss perceiving any connections between the inventory and the experimental tasks, instructors for each class administered the questionnaire. Then the E later returned to the classes with a list of names, and told the Ss that their names had been randomly selected. E elaborated on the importance of utilizing random selection, and indicated that she felt too many studies employed only volunteers which might have a biasing effect on the results. Ss were strongly urged to participate in order for the "random selection procedure" to be effective.

Ss were assigned to one of three conditions: (1) exposure to a tape of radio news reports which were heavily loaded with violent material (V); (2) exposure to the same violent tape as in Condition #1 after being insulted by a confederate (VI); (3) exposure to a tape

of radio news broadcasts containing non-violent material (NV). Twenty Ss were employed in each condition. One-half of the 20 consisted of individuals with high scores on Scale 4, while the remaining ten had low scores on Scale 4. The dependent variable consisted of the intensity of an electric shock administered to a confederate.

A pre-test measure of the level of aggression (i.e. as indicated by the intensity of an electric shock administered to a confederate) was obtained for all 60 Ss at the beginning of the experimental procedure. Each S was tested separately with a confederate (an undergraduate student) who posed as a student from another section. At the beginning of testing all Ss were informed that they were to participate in a study on extrasensory perception. Ss were told that previous investigations had indicated that when a person is threatened with electric shock his extrasensory ability tends to increase. Ss were then presented with the shock apparatus, and the E pointed out that the levers ranged from one to ten. Each S was told that as he moved from Lever #1 to Lever #10, shock intensity would gradually increase; and thus, become more painful. Ss were also informed that the shock was not intense enough at any level so as to actually do physical harm (see Appendix C).

Ss were presented with a list of 12 colors and asked to concentrate on each in order (see Appendix D). The confederate was asked to retire to an adjoining room where he was supposedly wired-up to the shock apparatus. No shock was actually administered. The wires extending from the shock control panel were actually connected to ten lights in the room where the confederate was located in order for him to record the S's responses. The S was told to flip the "ready lever"

whenever he was concentrating on a color in order to signal the confederate. The confederate then responded by way of a microphone. He had in his possession a list of 12 colors which he followed in giving his responses (see Appendix E). On the list only two of the 12 responses were correct. S was instructed to administer shock at whatever level he desired for all incorrect responses.

Two practice trials were given in which no shock was administered. E then left the room in order to insure that the S would feel free in administering shock.

After completion of the pre-test measure, both the confederate and E returned to the room and a second task was given which consisted of presenting both the S and confederate with a multiple choice numbers task. This task was explained as a situation in which both Ss would be thinking of the same thing (see Appendix F). The test consisted of 20 numbers each consisting of four digits (see Appendix G). The S and confederate were asked to select from four multiple choices the corresponding reversal for each of the four digit numbers. A time limit of one minute was allowed. The confederate had prior knowledge of the correct answers and, thus, easily completed the task within the time limit. However, one minute was an inadequate amount of time for the S to finish. The E remained in the room throughout this procedure.

Forty of the Ss (20 high scorers and 20 low scorers) were exposed to this situation without incidence, while the remaining Ss (10 high scorers and 10 low scorers) were insulted by the confederate. Insult consisted of remarks concerning the intellectual competence of the S. After completing the test, the confederate informed the E that the test was an insult to his intelligence and that any "idiot" could com-

federate then turned to the S and inquired as to whether he had finished in time. Then the S then indicated that he had not, the confederate proceeded to tell the S that he must have not been concentrating, and that even his younger sister was capable of finishing such a task. Insult procedures always included the references to "not concentrating on the test," and the insinuation that a young child could have completed the task.

The next procedure consisted of exposing 40 of the Ss (20 high scorers and 20 low scorers) to a three-minute tape of a violent news broadcast. The tape included such material as reports of a military take-over in El Salvador, an incident where a wife set her husband on fire with a mixture of sugar and gasoline, an eighteen-year-old killing his half-brother, and other similar reports of violence. The remaining 20 Ss were exposed to a three-minute tape of a non-violent news broadcast which contained reports of a bicycle racer's attempt to break the coast-to-coast record, a fund-raising drive for an industrial training center, the offering of a new course in musology at a nearby college, and other neutral types of news items.

The listening task was explained as a learning test of current events again involving practice in concentration. Ss were informed at the beginning of the broadcast that they would be asked some questions regarding the tape; and were instructed to relax and listen very carefully. Three multiple choice questions for both the non-violent and the violent condition were given to the S in order to insure that he was attending to the material. (Refer to Appendix H for instructions and Appendices I and J for questions).

The last task consisted of obtaining a post-test measure of the

Ss aggression level, and was identical to the first procedure. Ss were told that the purpose of this task was to ascertain whether thinking together in the other tasks had enhanced their extrasensory perception ability. Again Ss were instructed to administer shock for incorrect answers (see Appendix K for instructions). All 90 Ss were exposed to this condition.

Afterwards all Ss were debriefed regarding the actual purpose of the investigation, and cautioned not to expose the purpose to others. Questioning was also done in order to determine if the S had been able to ascertain the actual purpose of the experiment (see Appendix L for questioning format). Ss who did not believe that the confederate was receiving shock were discarded as well as those who had some vague concept of the actual purpose of the study.

## CHAPTER V

### DESIGN

The general design for this study was a 2 x 3 analysis of covariance. The factors under study were high versus low scorers on the K corrected Scale 4 of the MMPI, and the three conditions to which Ss were exposed: (1) anger-arousal (insult) followed by exposure to verbal reports of violence (VI), (2) exposure to violent verbal reports only (V), and (3) exposure to non-violent verbal material (NV). Means of the ten pre- and post-test shock tasks were recorded for each S. In the analysis the mean pre-test score was used as the covariate for each S, and the mean post-test score constituted the dependent variable. A posteriori comparisons using the Scheffé test statistic were carried out to glean further information from the data. In addition, a t-test was employed to compare pre-test shock levels of high and low scorers on Scale 4.

## CHAPTER VI

### RESULTS

Table I shows the summary table for the analysis of covariance. A significant difference between the three conditions to which Ss were exposed was obtained ( $\underline{F} = 6.5064$ ,  $\underline{df} = 2/53$ ,  $\underline{p} < .01$ ). The adjusted mean shock administered by Ss in these conditions were 5.7394, 5.2006, and 4.4850 for groups VI, V, and NV respectively. Results of Scheffé's test revealed the Ss in the experimental groups (groups VI and V combined) administered significantly higher shocks than Ss in group NV ( $\underline{F} = 5.2466$ ,  $\underline{df} = 1/56$ ,  $\underline{p} < .05$ ), and Ss in group VI administered significantly higher shocks than Ss in group NV ( $\underline{F} = 6.3815$ ,  $\underline{df} = 1/56$ ,  $\underline{p} < .05$ ).

Considering only the data for High 4 Ss (see Figure 1), pairwise comparisons using Scheffé's method indicated that Ss in the VI condition administered significantly higher shocks than Ss in the NV condition ( $\underline{F} = 4.7219$ ,  $\underline{df} = 1/56$ ,  $\underline{p} < .05$ ); and also that Ss in the V condition administered significantly higher shocks than Ss in the NV condition ( $\underline{F} = 5.6391$ ,  $\underline{df} = 1/56$ ,  $\underline{p} < .05$ ). In considering the results for Low 4 Ss only (see Figure 2), it was found that Ss in group VI gave significantly higher shocks than Ss in group NV ( $\underline{F} = 8.2906$ ,  $\underline{df} = 1/56$ ,  $\underline{p} < .01$ ); and that Ss in group VI also administered significantly higher shocks than Ss in group V ( $\underline{F} = 5.6165$ ,  $\underline{df} = 1/56$ ,  $\underline{p} < .05$ ).

Results of a t-test comparing the mean pre-shock levels for High

and Low 4's indicated a tendency for High 4's to administer higher shock levels than Low 4's (4.8900 and 4.3433 for High and Low 4's respectively), although differences were not significant ( $t = 1.1907$ ,  $df = 58$ ,  $.05 < p < .10$ ).

TABLE I  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Source	Adjusted Sum of Squares	df	MS	F
(A) MMPI Score	.4346	1	.4346	.3599
(B) Condition	15.7136	2	7.8568	6.5064**
A x B	4.3447	2	2.1724	1.7990
Error	64.0002	53	1.2076	

\*\*  $p < .01$

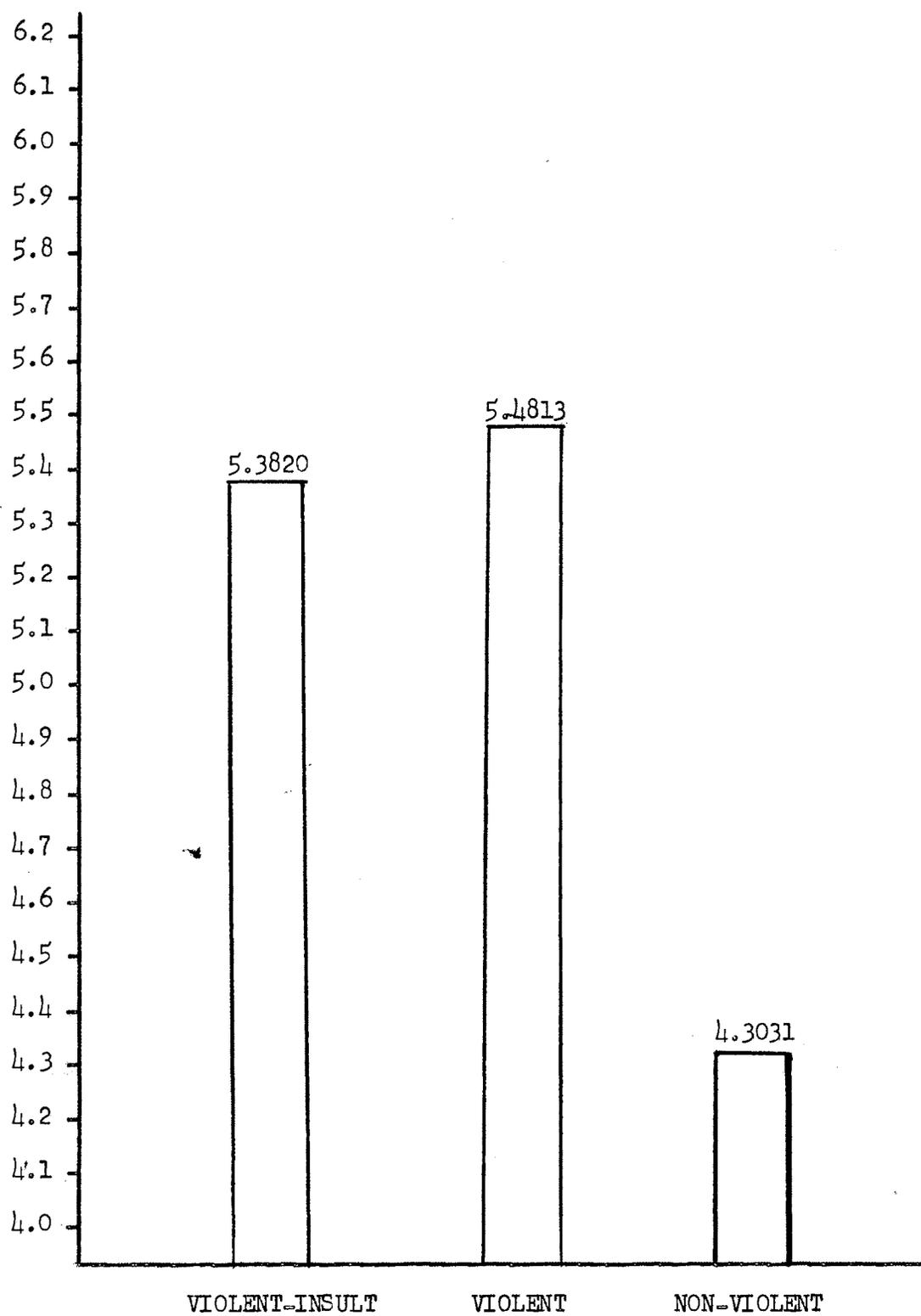


Figure 1. Adjusted Mean Shock for High 4's in Three Conditions

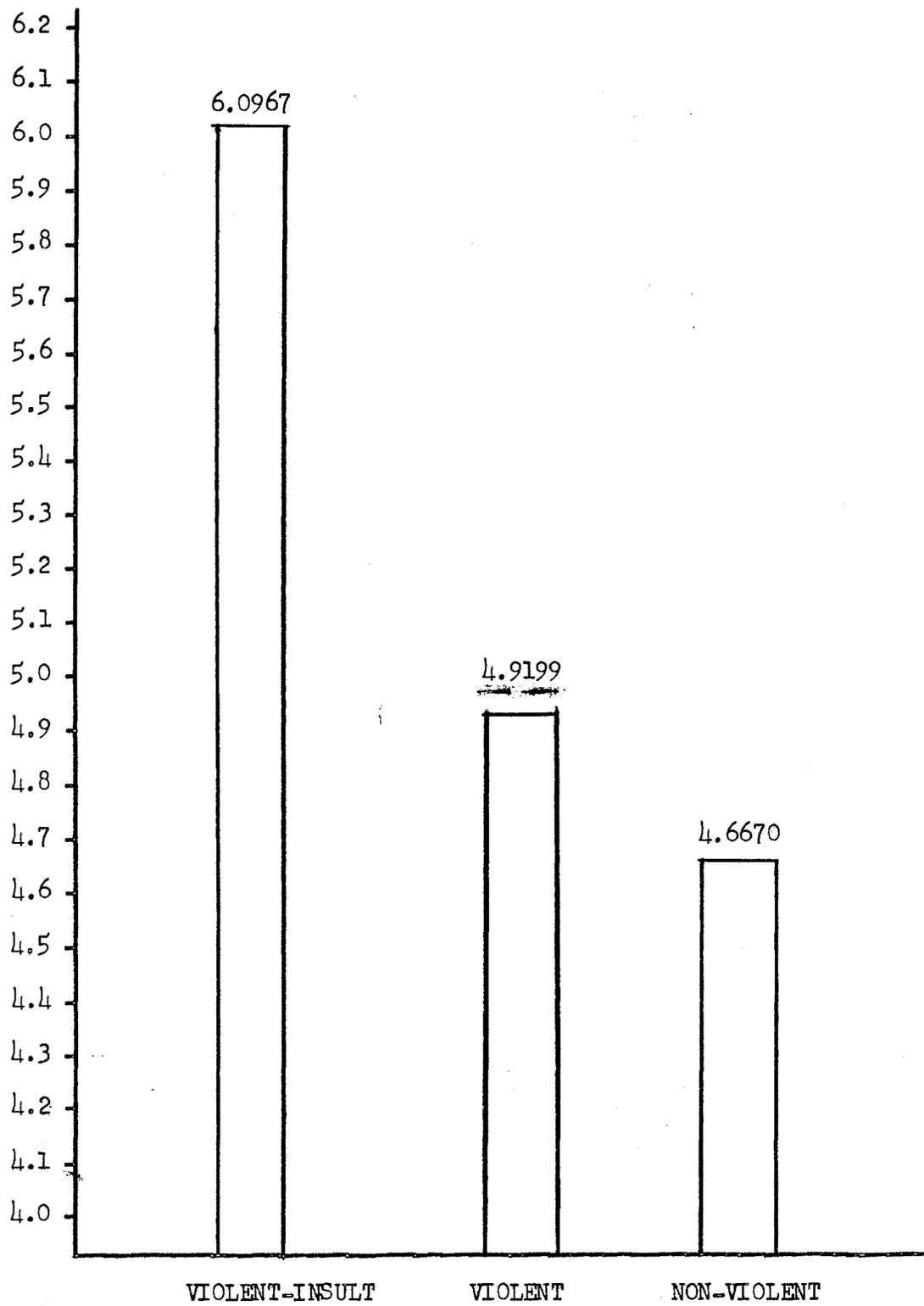


Figure 2. Adjusted Mean Shock for Low 4's in Three Conditions

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION

Findings for the Low 4 Ss are in general agreement with those of Scharff (1971). Exposure to violence alone was found to be insufficient for this group to elicit a significant increase in shock level as compared to Ss who were exposed to a non-violent tape. Insult or anger-arousal prior to exposure was found to yield a significant increase as compared with the NV group. It appears that for these individuals instigation to aggression is necessary for violence to have an effect.

The results, however, did deviate from those of Scharff in one respect. In Scharff's study it was found that Ss who were not insulted displayed significantly more aggressive behaviors after hearing reports of non-violent events than those who were likewise not insulted but later exposed to verbal reports of violence. It was suggested, on the basis of informal post-test questioning, that many Ss seemed annoyed over the failure of the confederate to show improvement on the extrasensory learning task and, thus, increased the level of shock administered for incorrect responses. Such annoyance did not seem to him as pronounced in post-test questioning of Ss in the no-insult, violent tape condition which suggested the possibility that these Ss may have been more distracted from the task by exposure to the violent reports. Results of the present study, despite similar apparatus and

procedure, have failed to replicate this finding.

Results for the High  $\bar{L}$  group indicate that exposure to verbal reports of violence is sufficient to elicit an increase in the intensity of shock that they will administer to another individual. Insult does not appear to be a necessary prerequisite for violence to have an effect. It was also noted that High  $\bar{L}$ 's tended to administer higher shock levels on the pre-test than did Low  $\bar{L}$ 's, although differences were not statistically significant.

During testing procedures, it was observed that High  $\bar{L}$  SS seemed to express more concern over administering shock to the confederate. In addition, they seemed less affected by the insult procedure, or at least were more reluctant to admit that they were angry. Several of the high scorers had to be discarded during post-test questioning on the basis of statements that they did not become anger-aroused by the confederate. They tended to make such comments as "he didn't bother me any, lots of people tell me I'm slow," or "that guy didn't make me mad, I know I'm slow at tests like this."

A possible explanation for the reactions of the High  $\bar{L}$ 's might be made in terms of the possibility that they are more aware of their aggressive inclinations. Therefore, they may tend to guard against displaying aggressive behavior in situations where directly provoked. Low  $\bar{L}$ 's may not be as aware of aggressive tendencies, and, thus, less defensive. Another possibility may simply be that High  $\bar{L}$  types are less concerned about evaluations made by others.

Whatever the basis of the differences may be, the results of this study do indicate that there are some differences in the way different individuals respond to exposures of violence. For some persons it may

not be necessary that instigation to aggress precede actual viewing of violence for increases in aggressive tendencies to occur; while for others anger-arousal may be a necessary antecedent for violence to have an effect on subsequent behavior.

A recent report to the Surgeon General (1972) has strongly stressed the need for further investigation in the area of personality factors and effects of exposure to violence. In view of the findings in the present study, the emphasis seems warranted. It would appear to be quite important that future researchers keep in mind the possibility that different individuals may react quite differently to exposures of violence, which in turn may greatly affect the type of results obtained with an unselected population.

One possible approach for future investigation might be a comparison of overall MMPI profiles rather than employment of a single scale. Drake (1954) has reported that elevations on both Scales 4 and 9 with lower scores on Scale 5 is quite successful as a predictor of aggressive tendencies. While Butcher (1965) and others have indicated that elevations on Scales 4 and 3 are useful in differentiating high aggressive individuals from low aggressive ones.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY

Sixty male college students were employed in this study to determine whether differential effects would be obtained between high and low scorers on the K-corrected Scale 4 of the MMPI after being exposed to actual verbal reports of violent news events. While supposedly participating in an extrasensory perception task involving "shocks" for incorrect responses, Ss were exposed to one of three conditions: (1) exposure to a tape of radio news reports which was heavily loaded with violent material (V); (2) exposure to the same violent tape as in Condition #1 after being insulted by a confederate (VI); (3) exposure to a tape of radio news broadcasts containing non-violent material (NV).

It was found that Low 4 Ss exposed to violence after being angered by insult administered significantly higher shocks than Ss exposed to non-violent reports. For High 4 Ss exposure to violence, regardless of whether Ss had previously been insulted or not, was found to result in the administration of significantly higher shocks than Ss exposed to non-violent reports.

It was concluded that the effects of exposure to violence may have different effects upon different individuals. Possible lines for future research were suggested.

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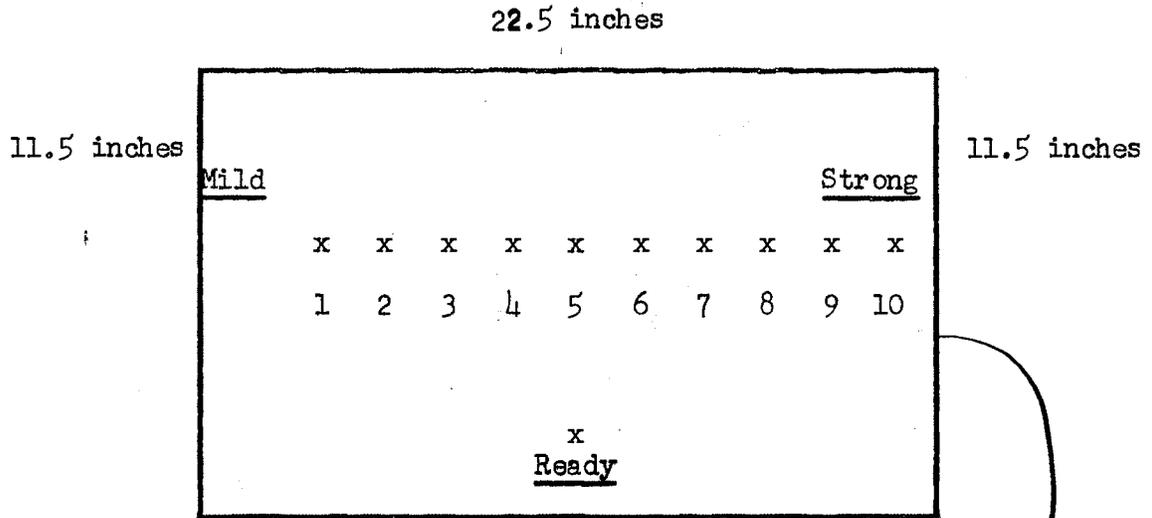
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

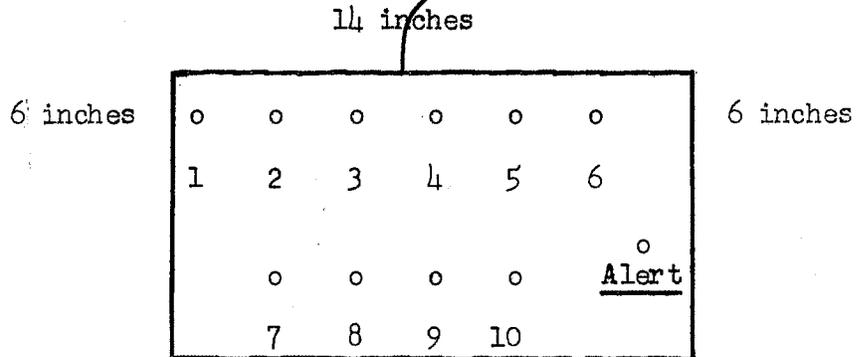
DIAGRAM OF APPARATUS



22.5 inches

Front Panel of Shock Apparatus

x = levers



Response Board

o = lights

APPENDIX B

SCALES 4 AND K OF THE MMPI

Instructions:

This inventory consists of numbered statements. Read each statement and decide whether it is true as applied to you or false as applied to you.

You are to mark your answers on the answer sheet you have. Look at the example of the answer sheet shown below. If a statement is TRUE or MOSTLY TRUE, as applied to you, blacken between the lines in the column headed 1. (See A below). If a statement is FALSE or NOT USUALLY TRUE, as applied to you, blacken between the lines in the column headed 2. (See B below). If a statement does not apply to you or if it is something that you don't know about, make no mark on the answer sheet.

Section of Answer Sheet	
A (1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>
B (1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Remember to give YOUR OWN opinion of yourself. Do not leave any blank spaces if you can avoid it.

In marking your answers on the answer sheet, be sure that the number of the statement agrees with the number on the answer sheet. Make your marks heavy and black. Erase completely any answer you wish to change. Do not make any marks on this booklet.

Remember, try to make some answer to every statement.

You may now begin with statement number 1.

1. I have not lived the right kind of life.
2. These days I find it hard not to give up hope of amounting to something.
3. I liked school.
4. In school I was sometimes sent to the principal for cutting up.
5. There is very little love and companionship in my family as compared to other homes.
6. My way of doing things is apt to be misunderstood by others.
7. My sex life is satisfactory.
8. My parents have often objected to the kind of people I went around with.
9. I have very few fears compared to my friends.
10. I have been quite independent and free from family rule.
11. I have used alcohol excessively.
12. My relatives are nearly all in sympathy with me.
13. I have very few quarrels with members of my family.
14. I have periods in which I feel unusually cheerful without any special reason.
15. My family does not like the work I have chosen (or the work I intend to choose for my life work).
16. What others think of me does not bother me.
17. At times my thoughts have raced ahead faster than I could speak them.
18. My parents and family find more fault with me than they should.
19. I am against giving money to beggars.
20. If people had not had it in for me I would have been much more successful.
21. I am neither gaining nor losing weight.
22. I am happy most of the time.
23. My daily life is full of things that keep me interested.

24. I find it hard to keep my mind on a task or job.
25. Sometimes without any reason or even when things are going wrong I feel excitedly happy, "on top of the world."
26. I have been disappointed in love.
27. I am always disgusted with the law when a criminal is freed through the arguments of a smart lawyer.
28. My conduct is largely controlled by the customs of those about me.
29. I believe that my home life is as pleasant as that of most people I know.
30. Someone has it in for me.
31. I know who is responsible for most of my troubles.
32. I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be.
33. I am easily downed in an argument.
34. I am sure I am being talked about.
35. I have never been in trouble with the law.
36. No one seems to understand me.
37. I wish I were not so shy.
38. I like to talk about sex.
39. I am sure I get a raw deal from life.
40. I do many things which I regret afterwards (I regret things more or more often than others seem to do).
41. My hardest battles are with myself.
42. During one period when I was a youngster I engaged in petty thievery.
43. I have had very peculiar and strange experiences.
44. Much of the time I feel as if I have done something wrong or evil.
45. I have never been in trouble because of my sex behavior.
46. At times I have very much wanted to leave home.
47. I do not mind being made fun of.

48. I find it hard to make talk when I meet new people.
49. It makes me uncomfortable to put on a stunt at a party even when others are doing the same sort of things.
50. When in a group of people I have trouble thinking of the right things to talk about.
51. At periods my mind seems to work more slowly than usual.
52. I have sometimes felt that difficulties were piling up so high that I could not overcome them.
53. I have never felt better in my life than I do now.
54. I have often met people who were supposed to be experts who were no better than I.
55. I find it hard to set aside a task that I have undertaken even for a short time.
56. I like to let people know where I stand on things.
57. At times I feel like swearing.
58. It takes a lot of argument to convince most people of the truth.
59. I have periods in which I feel unusually cheerful without any special reason.
60. At times I am all full of energy.
61. Criticism or scolding hurts me terribly.
62. I think a great many people exaggerate their misfortunes in order to gain the sympathy and help of others.
63. At times I feel like smashing things.
64. Often I can't understand why I have been so cross and grouchy.
65. I certainly feel useless at times.
66. I get mad easily and then get over it soon.
67. What others think of me does not bother me.
68. I have very few quarrels with members of my family.
69. I am against giving money to beggars.
70. At times my thoughts have raced ahead faster than I could speak them.

71. I frequently find myself worrying about something.
72. People often disappoint me.
73. I find it hard to make talk when I meet new people.
74. I worry over money and business.
75. It makes me impatient to have people ask my advice or otherwise interrupt me when I am working on something important.
76. I often think, "I wish I were a child again."
77. When in a group of people I have trouble thinking of the right things to talk about.
78. Most people will use somewhat unfair means to gain profit or an advantage rather than to lose it.
79. It make me uncomfortable to put on a stunt at a party even when others are doing the same sort of things.
80. I think nearly anyone would tell a lie to keep out of trouble.

## APPENDIX C

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIRST SHOCK TASK

I would like for you to participate in an experiment on extra-sensory learning. We have some evidence to indicate that most people can learn to develop the extrasensory ability if they are properly motivated. Extrasensory perception is the ability to know what somebody else is thinking. In a previous experiment we have found that when a person is threatened with electric shock his extrasensory ability goes up. The electric shock was varied from mild to strong, but it was never so high as to seriously hurt anyone. I know that this is quite unusual, but I would greatly appreciate your help. Do either of you have any objections to participating in a study which involves shock?

Let's see. You be the medium (pointing to subject) and you (the confederate) be the subject. Will you have a seat here (pointing S toward chair), and you come with me (to confederate). (E then takes confederate into adjoining room to supposedly hook him up to the shock apparatus).

(Instructions given to S when the confederate is in the other room). In front of you is a shock board with levers numbered from one to ten. The shock ranges from #1 mild to #10 strong. Your task is to push the single lever marked ready and think of the color on the list in front of you. You must go in order. The subject will

then respond over the speaker with the color. If he is right you don't shock him. If he is wrong you can give him any degree of shock you wish. Once the lever is depressed the shock will automatically cut off after one second. The shock is not strong enough at any level to actually do physical harm. Are there any questions? We will have two practice trials in which no shock will be given. Will you please just go ahead with the practice trials. (After completion of the practice trials). I will be waiting right outside the door. Just knock on the door when you're finished and we will begin the next task.

APPENDIX D

SUBJECT'S COLOR LIST IN "E.S.P. EXPERIMENT"

Practice

A. Blue

DO NOT SHOCK

B. Red

- 
- 1 - Yellow
  - 2 - Pink
  - 3 - Green
  - 4 - Blue
  - 5 - Orange
  - 6 - Red
  - 7 - Purple
  - 8 - White
  - 9 - Red
  - 10 - Brown
  - 11 - Gold
  - 12 - Green

APPENDIX E

CONFEDERATE'S RESPONSES TO E.S.P. TASKS

Practice

A. Green

DO NOT SHOCK

B. Yellow

---

<u>1st Test</u>	<u>Shock Level</u>	<u>2nd Test</u>	<u>Shock Level</u>
1. Green	_____	Red	_____
2. Blue	_____	Orange	_____
3. Red	_____	Blue	_____
4. Blue*	<u>No shock</u>	Pink	_____
5. Pink	_____	Orange*	<u>No shock</u>
6. Gold	_____	Gold	_____
7. Purple*	<u>No shock</u>	Blue	_____
8. Red	_____	Green	_____
9. Silver	_____	Red*	<u>No shock</u>
10. Green	_____	Green	_____
11. Orange	_____	Blue	_____
12. Blue	_____	Red	_____

Confederate's Comments:

---

\* Correct responses

## APPENDIX F

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR NUMBERS TASK

We will now have another learning task in which both of you will be taking the same test. There is no real purpose for this test except that you will both be thinking of the same things. However, I would appreciate it if you would do as many as you can in the time allowed and be as accurate as possible. On the papers you are about to receive, there will be a series of numbers. Your task will be to pick from the four possible choices, lettered A, B, C, and D, the one that correctly has the numbers written in reversed order. For example (placing the paper in front of both Ss), the first number is 1349. The correct reversal of the number would be answer C which is 9431. Look at the second series of numbers in the example. What would be the reversal of 2987 (pause)? Correct. The right answer is letter C which is 7892. Are there any questions? You will have one minute. Ready? Begin.

(For Ss in the insult condition, after completion of the numbers task). What did you think the purpose of this task was? (This procedure to allow confederate an opportunity to insult the S).

APPENDIX G

NUMBER TASK

Practice

	1349	A. 1493			
		B. 9413			
		*C. 9431			
		D. 9341			
2987	A. 8792	B. 8972	C. 7892	D. 8269	
2442	A. 2424	B. 4224	C. 2422	D. 2442	
6314	A. 4361	B. 4163	C. 4136	D. 4631	
8577	A. 8577	B. 7785	C. 7758	D. 7585	
5432	A. 1234	B. 2345	C. 2354	D. 5324	
7698	A. 8967	B. 8976	C. 6987	D. 9768	
2657	A. 7652	B. 7526	C. 7552	D. 7562	
1832	A. 3182	B. 2388	C. 2381	D. 2318	
5721	A. 1234	B. 5721	C. 5271	D. 1275	
3684	A. 4683	B. 4863	C. 4863	D. 6834	
4433	A. 4343	B. 4433	C. 3343	D. 3344	
5831	A. 1358	B. 1538	C. 1385	D. 3581	
9783	A. 3879	B. 3897	C. 3877	D. 3783	
8235	A. 5382	B. 5328	C. 5283	D. 5823	
1561	A. 5611	B. 1561	C. 1651	D. 6151	
3456	A. 4653	B. 5643	C. 6543	D. 3654	
8541	A. 1458	B. 1485	C. 1444	D. 1483	
5347	A. 7453	B. 7447	C. 7435	D. 7547	

7218	A. 2187	B. 7218	C. 8127	D. 3172
5244	A. 4435	B. 4445	C. 4425	D. 3333
1539	A. 5193	B. 3915	C. 3951	D. 9351

## APPENDIX H

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR RADIO LISTENING TASK

We will now have another task in which you will both again be practicing concentration. This will be a learning test of current events. I want you to both relax and listen carefully to the news report recording. When it is completed, I will ask you to answer some questions about the broadcast so just sit back, relax, and listen. We have put together a number of separate broadcasts, so you will have to listen carefully. Any questions?

## APPENDIX I

### QUESTIONS FOR VIOLENT TAPE RECORDING

1. A military take-over resulting in several deaths occurred in
  - (a) El Salvador
  - (b) London
  - (c) Czechoslovakia
  - (d) Northern Ireland
  
2. A Fort Sill soldier
  - (a) died in a plane crash north of Enid, Oklahoma.
  - (b) robbed a liquor store and murdered the owner.
  - (c) was set on fire by his 16-year-old wife.
  - (d) shot his wife and two children.
  
3. An 18-year-old male killed his half-brother by
  - (a) setting fire to their home.
  - (b) striking him in the head with a belt buckle.
  - (c) stabbing him with a kitchen knife.
  - (d) putting poison in his food.

APPENDIX J

QUESTIONS FOR NON-VIOLENT TAPE RECORDING

1. A new course of study is being offered at Oklahoma College of Liberal Arts in
  - (a) music
  - (b) archaeology
  - (c) musology
  - (d) ontology
  
2. Peter Duker, a former bicycle racer, is attempting to
  - (a) travel from New York to Florida on bike.
  - (b) break the coast-to-coast bike-riding record.
  - (c) is participating in a fund-raising contest.
  - (d) is planning on taking over Milburn's former position as quarterback at Oklahoma University.
  
3. A fund-raising drive is being conducted for
  - (a) the opportunities industrial training center.
  - (b) needy children overseas.
  - (c) a new auditorium at Oklahoma City Schools.
  - (d) crippled children in the Oklahoma City area.

## APPENDIX K

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECOND SHOCK TASK

For the last task, I would like for you to repeat the extra-sensory learning experiment to see if your thinking together in the other tasks has enhanced your ability to perceive the other's thoughts. You (pointing to the confederate) come back here with me again and get set up.

(E escorts confederate to adjoining room. To the S after returning from supposedly hooking-up the confederate). Remember that you shock the wrong answers only. The shock ranges from #1 mild to #10 strong. Push the signal button when you are thinking of the color on the list. You should again go in order down the list.

## APPENDIX L

### POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Before participating in this experiment did you believe in extra-sensory perception?
2. Did you know that the other person who served as your partner was not a student from another class?
3. Did you believe the experimenter's statement that electric shock will increase extrasensory perception?
4. Did you know that the other person was not actually receiving shock?
5. How did you feel when the subject missed in naming some of the colors you were concentrating on?
6. Did you notice anything unusual about the news broadcast you were asked to listen to?
7. What did you think the purpose of this entire investigation was?
8. When the other guy questioned your competence on the numbers task, how insulted or angry did he make you feel? (For insult condition only).

V I T A

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Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PERSONALITY TYPE AND THE EFFECTS OF VERBAL REPORTS OF  
VIOLENCE ON AGGRESSION

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